

Thoughts from the ICES Network

Rex Stevens, ICES Team Member

If you are of a certain generation and from the UK then the words 'quality assurance' may well still send a shiver down your spine. Visions of people with clip boards, heads down, shaking their head and ticking boxes (or not!) may well come to mind. A period of panic and doing the job 'properly' probably preceded and followed a QA audit. Thankfully things have changed.

From manufacturing and research, to education and customer service the principles of quality assurance can now be described by words and phrases such as:

- Quality focused
- Personal development
- Customer focused
- Process led
- Consultation
- Sustainability
- Consistency, effectiveness and efficiency
- Flexibility
- User led
- Needs based and context specific
- Acknowledgement
- Values and practice
- Transparent

The same is also true of sports development and sport for development with many examples of how programmes, partnerships, and organisations have taken strides to embed a culture of quality driven provision. For the sports related 'professions' to be seen in the same light as other established professions then this is an essential process for the industry.

Within the ICES Network a number of organisations have initiated quality assurance projects focused on their training and development programmes. As a member of the ICES team I have recently been working in partnership with colleagues at the Lakshmibai National University of Physical Education (LNUPE) and UNICEF India scoping a quality assurance model for the Master Trainers training programme within the PYKKA programme in India.

This is one of the advantages of a network like ICES. In an international sport-for-development and community sport field that is still relatively young the opportunity for different agencies to share practice, approaches and standards provides the basis for realistic quality assurance models that are informed by those organisations actually doing it on the ground. More importantly the body of professional knowledge across the network means this quality assurance can be driven from within organisations and not by a visitor wielding a clip board!